

*The Word of God a hid Treasure;  
being the Substance of*

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A  
S E R M O N

DELIVERED IN

The OCTAGON at HEPTONSTALL.

Published at the Request of the Hearers,  
By T H O M A S T A Y L O R.

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*And look that thou make them after their Pattern  
which was shewed thee in the Mount. Jehovah.*

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*In sacris Literis Veritas, non eloquentia quærenda est. Kemp.*



L E E D S:

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## P S A L M CXII. II.

*Thy Word have I hid in mine  
Heart, that I might not sin  
against Thee.*

**T**HY Word (says this Servant of God) is a Light unto my Feet, and a Lanthorn to my Path. Thy Word is pure, therefore Thy Servant loveth it. I esteem the Words of His Mouth before my necessary Food. Our Lord says, Search the Scriptures, they testify of me. The Bereans are commended, because they searched the Scriptures daily, to find the Truth of the Apostles Doctrine; on which Account they are called noble.

Now, every Word of God is pure, and ought to be attended to by all, and with all Diligence. Owing to this Neglect, is all that barbarous Ignorance, and irregular Conduct, which we see abound, so shamefully almost every where. In like Manner, it is much to be lamented, that this is so little attended to amongst many who have some little Acquaintance with the Things of God: Hence we find, many speak of the Things of the Kingdom of God in a very unintelligible Manner, which frequently gives Occasion to such as seek it against them. The seeing of this so frequently, has given me much Pain from Time to Time.

Let

Let me endeavour, my dear Hearers, to stir up myself and you, by beseeching you, to adopt the same Method which we here find the Royal Psalmist did; *Thy Word*, says he, *have I hid in my Heart, that I might not sin against Thee*. But to attend a little to the Words, it may be necessary to consider,

- I. What are we to understand by the Word of God?
- II. What is implied in hiding it in our Heart?
- III. For what End are we to hide it in our Heart?

I. What do we understand by this Phrase? By the Word of God, in Scripture, sometimes is meant, Christ himself, the essential Word of God. *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God\**. *And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His Glory, the Glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth†*. And where he is described in a more triumphant Manner, he is said, to be *clothed with a Vesture dipt in Blood, and his Name is called the Word of God‡*.

Now, although this is not what I apprehend the Holy Ghost means in the Text, yet, I cannot help wishing that, even in this Sense of the Word, the Text might be fulfilled in us. For when St. Paul would express the greatest and sublimest Things for his believing Colossians, he sums up the Matter in these simple, yet expressive Words, *Christ in you the Hope of Glory§*. And when our Lord was about to take His Leave of His Disciples, He comforts them by informing them, that *He*  
and

\* John i. 1. † John vi. 14. ‡ Rev. xix. 13. § Col. ii. 27.



and His Father would come to them and make Their Abode with them\*. See much more to the same Effect, 2 Cor. vi. Indeed this is a Privilege which every one should be aspiring after, and never rest till they can say, *They dwell in God, and God in them*†. While the Holy One of Israel dwells in you, you are safe; and tho' you may be like that Ship in which the Friend of Sinners was, sorely tossed with a Tempest, yet all the Storms of Temptation, all the Waves of Affliction, cannot destroy you while you have in you the Keeper of Israel; Nothing can overthrow you. See much to this Purpose in John xv. in the Beginning, and in Ps. xlvii.

2. By the Word of God sometimes we are to understand some express and particular Revelation from God; and in this Sense the Word frequently occurs in the Old Testament. And altho' these were special Messages, sometimes to particular Persons, sometimes to particular Nations, and sometimes to all Men indefinitely, yet we have them left upon Record for our Instruction, upon whom the Ends of the World are come. We find in these express Messages, sometimes Reproof, Exhortation, Instruction, or Direction, Encouragement or Consolation, so that we may reap Advantage from them all.

Indeed, we have this Advantage, that as many Parts of the Old Testament were Predictions of good Things to come, we see them happily accomplished in the New Testament‡. Many of the historical Parts of the Old Testament are brought in as having happened for our Instruction, as well as the Types and Shadows. Read 1 Cor. x. Heb. ix. Here I would say, *Gather up the Fragments, that Nothing be lost.*

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3. By

\* John xiv. 23. † 1 John iv. 16.

‡ If the Reader would see this to his Satisfaction, let him read Dr. Newton on the Prophecies.

3. By the Word of God, sometimes is meant the Ten Moral Precepts, called by the Jews, and Septuagint, the Ten Words of God. They may be so called in an emphatic Manner, in that they were spoken immediately by himself. In other Cases He spoke sometimes by an Angel, or by His Prophets, or by Dreams ; but here He spoke directly, without the Interposition of any Mediator, and the Manner deserves our Attention. The Mountain from whence Jehovah spake was so sacred, that the People were prohibited so much as to look upon it ; and if a Beast touched it, it was to be stoned, or shot through with a Dart. The Mountain was enveloped in thick Smoke ; awful Flashes of Lightning were seen ; loud Peals of Thunder were heard ; the Voice of a Trumpet waxed louder and louder, insomuch, that not only the Congregation, but even Moses quaked and trembled ; and as for the People, they desired God might speak no more to them in that Manner, lest they should die ; but that He Himself would act the Part of a Mediator. See the awful Scene, Exo. xix. compared with Heb. xii.

Moses takes Care to remind the People of this very important Circumstance in the recapitulating of the Law. *For ask now (says he) of the Days that are past, which were before thee, since the Day that God created Man upon the Earth, and ask from one Side of Heaven to the other, whether there hath been any such Thing, as this great Thing is, or hath been heard like it. Did ever People hear the Voice of God, speaking out of the Midst of the Fire as thou hast heard, and live\*?*

Now, the Words of this Law, shew in an awful Manner what God is, His holy and pure Nature, and in like Manner shew us what we should be, and then condemn us, supposing we are not what it commands us to be : So that *As*

*many*

\* Deut. iv. 32, 33.

*many as are under the Works of the Law are under the Curse\**. God has said, *I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People†*. Perhaps this may be what David meant in the Text.

4. By the Word of God, I in general apprehend we are to understand, the whole revealed Will of God, as we have it in the Scriptures of Truth : And here we are highly favoured indeed, to what former Ages were. The Old Testament Saints, had but a Part of the Sacred Cannon, and a very dark Part too, until the Blessed Redeemer, the Fulfiller of the dark Types and Shadows appeared. We are blest with the Prophecies, and their Accomplishment ; the Types and their great Antitype ; so that the one is a happy Confirmation of the other. Besides, until the Art of Printing was found out†, it was not easy to come at a Bible, perhaps all the Substance of a Man's House would not purchase one ; but now that Difficulty is removed, any poor Man may be possessed of that invaluable Treasury for Half-a-Crown or three Shillings. Nor was this the only Inconvenience former Ages had to grapple with ; for, until the Reformation took place, the Bible was locked from the Generality, because it was not permitted to be translated into Vulgar Languages : But now that Inconvenience is removed, and Providence has furnished us with an excellent Translation, so that if we are ignorant of the Scriptures it is our own Fault. This shall lead me to the second Thing proposed, viz.

II. What is implied in hiding the Word in our Heart ? It is hinted above, that by the Word in the Text, I understand the whole revealed Will of God

\* Gal. iii. 10. † Jer. xxxi. 33.

† This ingenious and useful Art was invented in 1432, and is ascribed to Koster, or Kust, or Schoeffer, or Guttemberg, all Germans, but to which is not certainly known.



God contained in the Scriptures of Truth. This must necessarily imply a diligent Searching of them. We find this to have been the Practice with good Men in all Ages. We see what a dear Lover of God's Word David was, if we go no farther than his Psalms; and it is a Commendation St. Paul gives of Timothy, *That from a Child he had known the Scriptures,* (and that he might add a proper Weight unto their Authority, he adds) *which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, thro' Faith which is in Christ Jesus\**. 'Tis much to be lamented, that this Practice is so much neglected, even by such as profess to own the Authority of the Scriptures. Numbers will talk a deal of precious Time away, and will not find Time for this salutary Employment. The primitive Christians paid a very particular Attention to the written Word, and were mightily in the same; their Adversaries knew this, and sought by all Means to destroy it†. The venerable Puritans were exceedingly remarkable in this Particular: They were careful, exceeding careful, that their Children and Servants should read the sacred Oracles; and I cannot help thinking that it is the diligent and constant Practice of all who are taught of God even now.

Indeed, I greatly lament that reading any Thing is so little attended unto, quite contrary to every Thing which I ever experienced. In the Way of Religion, we live in an Age in which useful and experimental Books abound in great Plenty; and if we make not a proper Ute of them 'tis our own Fault.

Hiding the Word of God in our Heart implies, that we understand it as well as read it. For the Understanding being the leading Faculty of the Soul,

\* 2 Tim. iii. 15.

† I should recommend the English Reader to the following Books, Echard's Ecclesiastical History, and Cave's Primitive Christian.



Soul, if it is not employed in what we read, and what we hear, we are not much the better for either. The Passions being affected and the Judgment uniformed, is like a Land Flood, it does more Harm than Good, and is soon dried up again: But when the Mind is affected from right Views of Things, it is like a gentle Stream from a never-failing Spring. Too many hear Sermons with their Passions, and if some Commotion is raised there (tho' they neither know whence it comes, nor whither it goes) they Account it a great Blessing; tho' perhaps their Tempers are not one whit the better, neither do they see any Thing clearer. In these Persons Argument is lost, and all that can be said to the Understanding means little. But such do not hide God's Word in their Heart, and are liable to be turned about with every Wind, and to fall a Prey to every Pretender, if he can but work upon their Passions. The Character which our Lord gives of the Way-side Hearers is, that *when they hear the Word they understand it not, then cometh the Wicked One and catcheth away that which was sown in his Heart\**. On the other Hand, the good Ground Hearer is said to *hear the Word, and understand it, and which bringeth Fruit†*. But a Man must have the Wisdom from on High in order to a right Understanding, otherwise the *Vision*, (i. e. the whole revealed Will of God) of all is become as the Words of a Book that is sealed, which Men deliver to one that is learned, saying, *Read this, I pray thee: And he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the Book is delivered to one that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: And he saith, I am not learned‡*. For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man that is within him? even so the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God. So that the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God: For

\* Matt. xiii. 19. † Verse 23. ‡ Isa. xxix. 11, 12.

*For they are Foolishness to him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned\**. Our Lord well knew the Necessity of his Hearers understanding Him, and hence He asked His Disciples, *Have ye understood these Things?* When the Sadducees came, as they thought, with an unanswerable Question, He replied, *Ye do err: How so? Not knowing the Scriptures nor the Power of God†*. We find when the Captives returned from Babylon, proper Persons read in the Book of the Law distinctly, and gave the Sense, and caused them to understand the Reading‡. Without the Use of this noble Faculty, we may read, and hear much, and profit very little. We may see how this Observation was verified in the Case of the Disciples, they heard Him who spake as never Man spake, and yet how amazingly dark and blind were they until He opened their Understanding that they might understand the Scriptures§. My dear Brethren, this is to me Matter of Heaviness and Sorrow; notwithstanding all the Advantages we now have both of hearing and reading; yet, how little the Generality do understand. O! when shall this Reproach be rolled away from amongst us? We see to how little Purpose the Scribes and Pharisees read the Scriptures; for doubtless they read them, and the Prophecies relating our Lord's coming into the World; yea, and were in Expectation of His coming; yet, when He did come, how did they receive Him? Let the Evangelists inform you. They read of a Messiah who was to be despised and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief||. That He was to be cut off for the Sins of His People\*\*. That they should smite the Judge of Israel with a Rod upon the Cheek-Bone‡. That the Sword of Jehovah should awake against His Fel-

\* 1 Cor. ii. 11, 14. † Matt. xxii. 29. ‡ Neh. viii. 8. § Luke xxiv. 45. || Isa. liii. 4. \*\* Dan. ix. 26. † Mic. v. 2.

*Fellow* \*. But, behold, they expected a Messiah to come in the Pomp and Splendor of the Emperor of the Universe, and seeing Him assume nothing of that Kind, their Cry was, *Away with Him, crucify Him, crucify Him* †. Thus we see how little they understood the Word of God which they heard daily in their Synagogues: And how many thousands are in the same unhappy Condition even to this Day.

3. Hiding the Word in our Heart implies, that we experience it. Without this our Reading and our Understanding will avail but very little. The Hungry may hear of Food; but if he partakes not of it, that will signify Nothing. Supposing you were all sick, or lame, and knew there were Medicines of the greatest Value in one of these Galleries, yet without their Application, you might return as sick and as lame as you came hither; the Case is exactly parallel. Experience is mentioned in Scripture, under such strong, yet well known, Figures of Speech as Eating, Tasting, Seeing, Feeling, &c. 'Tis not sufficient that we understand the Theory of Faith, Repentance, the New Birth, and the gracious Influences, but that we know by happy Experience what it is to repent, believe, and know what that blessed State is, called, a Passing from Death unto Life.

We can never sufficiently estimate any Mercy till we feel the Necessity of it. If we were never hungry, we should not prize our Food; or if we were never weary, we should not properly esteem an easy Bed: No more will any one have much Regard for Christ as a Saviour, who has not felt himself a Sinner. Hence we find the most solemn and penitential Language used every Lord's Day to very little Purpose. *We have erred and strayed from Thy Ways like lost Sheep. We have followed too much the Devices and Desires of our own Hearts, &c.* This

\* Zec. xiii. 7. † John xix. 15.



This is all solemn Truth ; but, alas ! who is sensible of its being so ? The Want of this Sensibility, makes the hearing of Christ crucified a very insipid Thing to thousands ; so it was to the Jews, to whom our Lord said, *They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick* \*. All the Epistles were addressed to Persons who had felt the Word of Truth to be *the Power of God unto Salvation* †. Who from being *dead in Trespasses and Sins, were quickened* ‡ ; *who were risen with Christ* §, and *who were brought out of Darkneſs into marvellous Light* ||. They must be People of the very same Stamp, who can relish the same Writings now. 'Tis of singular Use to understand the Scriptures by Experience, and 'tis the very same in hearing ; just like a Person hearing of a Country through which he has passed ; when the Cities, or Towns, or Buildings are mentioned, the Hearer's Attention is struck, and the Idea of every Thing is very lively : The very same is the Case with the Man who hears an experimental Sermon ; the Preacher touches the very Strings, which he well understands, and can say to the Preacher, " Now I know thou speakest truly, for I have felt the very Things which thou hast described : " Like the Samaritans, who when they had heard our Lord himself, said to the Woman, *Now we believe, not because of thy Saying : For we have heard Him ourselves, and do know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World* \*\*. †

4. Hiding God's Word in our Heart implies, a cordial Love to it. Indeed, whatever we supremely love has the greatest Share in our Heart : There the Miser has his Wealth ; there the Gallant has his Mistress ; there dwells the Fame of the Man

\* Matt. ix. 12. † Rom. i. 16. ‡ Eph. ii. 1. § Col. iii. 1.  
|| 1 Pet. ii. 9. \*\* John iv. 42.

† For a clear Description of Experimental Religion, I heartily with every One would read and consider Mr. Wesley's first Vol. of Sermons.



Man of Honor, and there the Drunkard seats his Wine, or strong Drink. Now it is the Character of the good Man, that he *delights himself in the Law of the Lord, and in His Law doth he meditate Day and Night\**. Whatever we delight ourselves in, we can think on it with great Satisfaction. And, what an ample Field of Truth does the holy Book of God afford us; what Subject can we need which is not treated upon more or less? and the Things most necessary to be known, are spoke of with exceeding great Plainness. I cannot conclude this Article better than in the Words of the Psalmist, *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul: The Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the Simple. The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the Heart: The Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the Eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the Judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired than Gold, yea, than much fine Gold: Sweeter also than Honey, and the Honey Comb†*.

5. Hiding God's Word in our Heart implies, that we take Care to treasure it up there, and not easily let it slip. The Words seem to allude to Persons who lay up either Corn, or Money, or some such valuable-Thing in some secure Place, where they can readily find it themselves, but it is kept safe from others. Thus we find the surprising Things which attended the Birth of John the Baptist, made such an Impression upon all who heard them, that *they laid them up in their Hearts‡*; the same is said of the blessed Virgin, concerning the sayings of her adorable Son, that she kept *His Sayings in her Heart§*. The Word of God is like Seed which is sown in the Earth, which if it abide not there, it cannot take Root, neither can it bring forth Fruit. Indeed, whatever we love we are very tenacious in holding fast, and do not readily part with it. In temporal

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Things

\* Ps. i. 2. † Ps. xix. 7, 11. ‡ Luke i. 66. § Luke ii. 51.

Things Persons need no cautioning on these Heads, but are exceeding careful without much Admonition, whether the Advice given may respect their Health or their Substance; and I know no Reason but the same Attention should be given to the one Thing needful, and abundantly more so. *Wherefore, we ought to give the more earnest Heed to the Things which we have heard, lest at any Time we should let them slip\*.*

III. The third general Head is, to consider for what End we are to hide God's Word in our Heart.

Now there appears a Mistake in many who read the Scriptures. Some read them as their Duty, and think they are doing God some Kind of Service if upon a Lord's Day, after eating a good Dinner, they will vouchsafe Him the Honor to read a little in His Word, until they drop a-sleep over it. 'Tis no Matter what they read, that is out of the Question, whether it is *Abraham begat Isaac*, or *believe in the Lord Jesus*. Doubtless it is our Duty to read, but it is not a Duty to rest in. Many read in order to be great Talkers, and fancy if they can quote Scripture, others must admire their Noise as much as they admire it themselves. There are others who read in order to maintain some favourite Tenet; these will rack and stretch every Thing to make it tally with their own Nostrum. These are something like the Tyrant which I have read of, who was resolved to have a Number of Men exactly of the same Height, such as were too short, he would have them stretched upon the Rack in order to make them long enough: Thus, some stretch and mangle the Word of God in order to make it extend to their Measure, but by that Means are in Danger of making the Word of God of none Effect.

But to return from this Digression, (for which

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I beg your Pardon) we see a more worthy End<sup>d</sup> proposed in the Text, viz. *That we may not sin against God*. Let this be our Motive in reading and understanding the Scriptures.

If we would not sin against God, let us attend to all the Threatenings and Reproofs in the Book of God. These are all necessary, and are something like your Quick-Thorn Hedges, which are intended to keep your Cattle in due Bounds; for there is a vile Propensity in us to break our Bounds, and trespass our just Limits: The Lord has very wisely and graciously put the Threatenings as so many Briars and Thorns in our Way. St. Paul bids Titus *reprove, that they might be found in the Faith; yea to reprove sharply*\*. *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, and for Correction, as well as for Instruction in Righteousness*†. They who get beyond the Reproofs get beyond the Teachings of St. Paul, and so growing wise above what is written, grow wise in their own Conceits, and thereby are in Danger of being deceived.

2. If we would not sin against God, let us hide all the Cautions in our Hearts. There is not an Evil we are in danger of, but we are guarded against it; and the Things we are most in danger of, these we are most frequently and plainly cautioned against. To instance in a few Particulars: How often do we find the Lord cautioning His People, in the Old Testament, against Idolatry? it would be endless to transcribe the Passages; and St. John shuts up his first Epistle with, *Little Children, keep yourselves from Idols*‡.

Now, what is an Idol? Any Thing which is put in the Place of God; a Mite or a Mountain; an Ass, or an Archangel. If every Idol in England was to have a Temple built, there would not be Room to contain them. Money, Wine, Women,

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\* Tit. i. 13. † 2 Tim. iii. 16. ‡ 1 John v. 21.



men, good Creatures, bad Creatures, all are made into Idols; so that *there are Gods many and Lords many; yet to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all Things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all Things, and we by Him\**.

Again, Unbelief is another Thing which we are repeatedly guarded against, both directly and indirectly. *The Unbeliever shall be damned†. Nay, he is condemned already‡. Nay, the Wrath of God abideth on him§.* And there is one Thing said of the Unbeliever, that is not even said of the Devil, to wit, *that he makes God a Liar||*. 'Tis said of the Devil, that he is a Liar and the Father of Lies; but 'tis never said of him that he makes God a Liar. Indeed, he has too much Sense to do this himself, whatever he may prompt fallen Man to do. The Apostle to the Hebrews gives a summary Account of the Rebellion of the Israelites, and of their falling in the Wilderness, and concludes with these remarkable Words, *So we see they could not enter in because of Unbelief\*\**. On the other Hand, what excellent Things are said of Faith or Believing. See John iii. 14, 17. Heb. xi. throughout. What is it which Faith cannot do? And what is it the Unbeliever must not suffer?

Love to the World is another of the common Evils we are very largely warned against. Our Lord seldom preached a Sermon, but He had Something against this base Passion; He bids us go to the Ravens, Lillies, &c. to learn to cast our Care upon Him who careth for us. The Parable of the rich Man and Lazarus is one of these kind Cautions, put in a very striking Manner indeed. In the Parable of the Sower, we find the same gloomy Delight levelled at: *Some Seed fell among Thorns and the*

\* 1 Cor. viii. 6. † Mark xvi. 16. ‡ John iii. 16. § John iii. || 1 John v. 10. \*\* Heb. iii. 19.



*the Thorns sprang up, to wit, the Cares of the World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches, choak the Word\*.*

In the Parable of the great Supper, we find, the Farm, and the Merchandise, kept many who were invited from coming to the Supper†. St. John, in giving the Cautions which he had heard his Lord so frequently repeat, ushers it in with a Particular Solemnity, addressing himself respectively to little Children, young Men, and Fathers, and what is it He is about to bring forth? Hearken, and he will tell you: *Love not the World, neither the Things which are in the World; if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him‡.* And our Lord's Question is much to the Purpose, *What shall it profit a Man, if he should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul§?* Brethren, let these Sayings sink deep into your Hearts.

3. If we would not sin against God, let us hide all His Commands in our Hearts. He Himself has made this the standing Mark of our being His Followers, *If ye love me keep my Commandments||.* In this Respect the Lord is very particular, and suits Himself to every State and every Condition in Life. Are we unawakened, His Word is, *Unto you, O Men, I call, and my Voice is unto the Sons of Men\*\*.* Come let us reason together; if ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the Good of the Land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the Sword†. Turn ye at my Reproof‡‡. Except ye repent, ye shall perish§§. Thus will not God leave Himself without a Witness, even in the most obdurate. But, supposing we be awakened, and in some measure sensible of our Danger, the express Command is, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World|||.* Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you

B 3

Rest.

\*Matt. xiii. †Luke xiv. ‡1 John ii. 12, 16. §Matt. xvi. 26. ||John xiv. 15. \*\*Pro. viii. 4. †Isa. i. 18, 20. ‡‡Pro. i. 23. §§Luke xiii. 3. |||John i. 29.

*Rest. Take my Yoke upon you, and you shall find Rest for your Souls\**. Indeed, it would be endless to transcribe all the encouraging Passages which are found in the Book of God, in Favour of such as are sensible Sinners; and all is delivered in the Form of Commanding; so that Duty and Privilege go Hand in Hand together. Are we Believers? The Word of Command to us runs thus, *As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him†*. Stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled with the Yoke of Bondage‡. Be not conformed to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Minds. Romans xii. read the whole Chap. Likewise, Ephesians v. 1 Peter ii. each throughout. Indeed, all the Epistles are written to Believers; I wish they were more read and attended unto§. Are we Backsliders? See how affectionately the Lord calls after us, three Times together, in Jer. iii. Read also His own Letter to the Church of Ephesus, Rev. ii. and to the Laodiceans still in a worse Condition, Chap. iii. at the End. The Case of the Prodigal is quite pertinent, Luke xv. How affectionately is he received.

But the Book of God does not only speak to particular States, but likewise to particular Conditions. Are we Servants?—then it is, *Servants, obey your Masters, according to the Flesh, in all Things; not in Eye-Service, as Men-pleasers, but in Singleness of Heart*. Are we Masters?—let us attend; *And ye Masters do the same Things unto them, forbearing Threatening; knowing that your Master is in Heaven; neither is there Respect of Persons with Him*. Are we Children?—Hear then the Word of the Lord; *Children obey your Parents in the Lord:*

for

\* Matt. xi. 28, 29. † Col. ii. 6. ‡ Gal. v. 1.

§ 'Tis a Pity every one who is able does not get Mr. Wesley's Notes, in Pocket-Volumes, on the New Testament; they are short, yet full and plain.

for it is right. Honour thy Father and Mother, (which is the first Command with Promise) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon the Earth. Are we Parents?—let us attend unto our Lesson; And ye Parents provoke not your Children to Wrath: but bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. To Wives, the Command is, *Wives, submit yourselves to your own Husbands, as unto the Lord. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, and called him Lord.* Are we Husbands?—let us attend unto our Duty; *Husbands, love your Wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it\**. For each of these relative Duties, consider the two invaluable Chapters from whence these Quotations are taken, I mean Ephe. v. vi.

But the divine Directory does not leave the Matter here; but is yet more particular. Are we Preachers?—We are not left without our Document. *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a Workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* Are we Hearers? *Take Heed therefore how ye hear. Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your Souls as they that must give an Account. Esteem them very highly in Love, for their Works Sake.* In one Word, whether Kings or Subjects, Bond or Free; Young or Old, Neighbours or Brethren, there is Something expressly said to each Condition. But who attends unto this? This Neglect has caused me much Concern, and often discouraged me not a little in my public Department in Life. Much is said by many upon Faith, and great Blessings are spoken of and the like; but I look upon all as mere Fancy, unless they are accompanied with Attention to our Place and Station in Life. But there is one Point more to consider.

5. It is necessary for our Encouragement, to hide the Promises in our Hearts; and these we shall find

\* See Mr. Wesley on these Points in his 4th Vol. of Sermons.



find very needful in a dark and cloudy Day. Thanks be unto God, we find a Promise made to every Want. Do we want Wisdom?—Hear ye what the Fountain of true Wisdom hath said, *I will lead the Blind by a Way which they know not; I will lead them in Paths they have not known; I will make Darkness Light before them\**. I am the Light of the World, he that followeth me shall not walk in Darkness, but shall have the Light of Life†. So that if any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally to all, and it shall be granted to him†. Are we guilty, and feelingly sensible of our State?—He cries from Heaven, *I have blotted out thy Transgressions as a Cloud, and thine Iniquities as a thick Cloud§*. So that if we confess our Sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness||. To attend unto these reviving Cordials is of singular Use both to such as are now seeking, and to such as once did obtain Pardon of Sin. We cannot depend too much upon what God has said, nor too little upon ourselves.

Again, as we are become fallen, ruined Sinners, we are become exceedingly wretched. *Man that is born of a Woman is of few Days, and full of Trouble\*\**. Full of Trouble! How true and full is the Description; and how do we see it verified every Day. Now the Creatures cannot take away the Anguish of our Spirits. But see how much God has promised in the 41st, 42d, and 43d Chapters of Isaiah, read them diligently over. Our Lord promised to send a Comforter (unto His Disciples) *which should abide with them for ever, even the Spirit of Truth†*. This He will fulfil in His poor, mourning Followers even now. See Isaiah lxi. from the Beginning; so that *blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted††*. Do we feel our Deadness, and groan under it? 'Tis a heavy

\* Isa. xlii. 16. † John viii. 12. ‡ James i. v. § Isa. xlii. 22.

|| 1 John i. 8. \*\* Job xiv. 1. † John xiv. 16. †† Matt. v. 4.

heavy Complaint ; but we have a Redress for this Grievance also : *The Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live\**. Again, *I am the Resurrection and the Life : He that believeth in me, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die†*. Sinner, believest thou this ?

Indeed, Religion without Life is a poor uncomfortable Thing. There is no running our Christian Race without Life ; there is no *fighting the good Fight of Faith* without Life. No Man can quicken his own Soul, much less can he quicken that of another ; but there is a gracious Quickener who is ever ready. Read that animating Vision in Ezek. xxxvii. from the Beginning, and do you call for the Breath to come into your Soul, and He will answer !

Do we feel our own Weaknesses ? Indeed, these are very many ; but still there are gracious Promises, which we may hide in our Hearts and safely confide in. *In the Day when I cried, Thou answerest me ; and strengthenest me with Strength in my Soul‡*. Let this be carefully laid up in your Heart, and let it encourage you to do as David did. But, I shall add no more than that fine Passage in Isaiah, sufficient to animate the most desponding Creature living. *He giveth Power to the Faint ; and to them that have no Might He increaseth Strength. Even the Youths shall faint and grow weary, and the young Men shall utterly fall : But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their Strength ; they shall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not be faint§*. Confiding in a Promise-keeping God, you may say, *I can do all Things thro' Christ which strengtheneth me||*. Do you feel yourself

\* John v. 25. † John xi. 25, 26. ‡ Psa. cxxxviii. 3.  
§ Isa. xl. 28, 30. || Phil. iv. 23.

yourself all unclean? and does that discourage you? Attend unto the Promises which were made to *circumcise your Heart to love Him with all your Heart\**. To *sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean. To cleanse you from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit: That He will cleanse the Blood which He has not cleansed†. He is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness‡. So that He has given to us exceeding great and precious Promises; that thro' these we may be made Partakers of the Divine Nature§.*

I can but just touch upon these important Points: Our Time is gone. Upon the Whole, what Reason have we to bless God for His Word? How justly have holy Men in all Ages, esteemed it an invaluable Treasury. What a rich Display of the Mind of Heaven. Let us take Heed of all such as treat the Book of God with Contempt, and avoid their Society as we would such as have the Plague. Whenever any One begins to despise the Book of God, it is a sure Sign they pay very little Regard to the Things of Eternity. It is Nothing less than a Miracle, that the Bible has been preserved in the Manner it has; considering how eagerly its Destruction has been sought both by the Pagans and the Papists; yet, like the Bush in the Wilderness, it has been unconsumed amidst the Flames. Beware of such as speak lightly of the Bible, and say that several of its Writers were but Men. 'Tis true they were but Men; but they were holy Men of God, and spoke and wrote as the Spirit guided them.

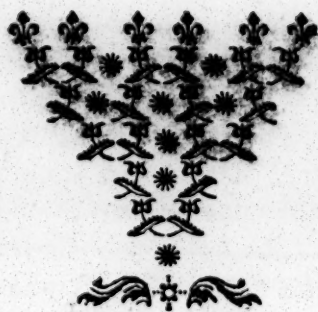
Let us take Heed to make a proper Use of the Bible; let it be much read in your Closets, and in your Families; bring your Children to an early Acquaintance with the Holy Book of God. Let your Experience and Practice be regulated by this divine Standard; so that both will be ~~for~~ firm and strong,

\* Deut. xxx. 6. † Joel iii. 21. ‡ 1 John i. 8. § 2 Pet. i. 4.



strong, that no Man can condemn or gainsay.  
 Take heed all you hear be consistent with the plain,  
 simple Truth delivered in the Bible, and as such  
 give it a cordial Reception; so that you may at all  
 Times adopt the Words of the Text, *Thy Word*  
*have I hid in my Heart, that I might not sin a-*  
*gainst Thee.*

F I N I S.



"While I was in the Manchester  
Circuit, I published a dis-  
course upon Thoughts,  
Words and Actions,  
intitl'd, A Cry to the  
Professors Conscience &c."

Extract from an  
"Account of the Experience  
of  
Mr Thomas Saylor"  
page 52.

